



Hospital Approaches to Health Disparities

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June 8, 2009

Definitions

- Health Disparities - Population specific differences in the presence of disease, health outcomes or access to care
- Cultural Competency - A set of congruent behaviors, attitudes and policies that come together in a system, agency or among professionals that enables effective work in cross-cultural situations

Health Disparities Causes

Socio-economic status

Age, gender

Race, ethnicity

Limited English proficiency

Cultural factors, customs

Disabilities, special health needs

Unconscious bias

Past Efforts to Address Disparities

- Promotion of specific customs and beliefs of Judaism within a Jewish sponsored organization
- Response to the culture of poverty by interventions that aim at the social causes of poor health
- Response to limited English proficiency through language interpretation

How to Develop a Systematic Response

- Institutional support
- Assessment
- Education
- Partnerships
- Services
- Research

Institutional Support

- Leadership support and ownership
- Reasons for taking action or implementing change
 - governmental mandates
 - patient safety and satisfaction
 - the right thing to do

Assessment

- Self-assessment using CLAS or other assessment tools
- Patient involvement through satisfaction surveys and focus groups
- Community stakeholders and partners

Education

- Awareness training for all
 - leadership
 - providers
 - all staff
- Integration into existing teaching programs
- New employee orientation
- Community awareness to engage partners

Partnerships

- Other health care organizations
- Community advocacy groups
- Government
- Universities



Services

- Outreach
- Education
- Advocacy

Research

- Data collection
- Partnership with universities
- Modification of practice according to outcomes